

How the Drug Discount Card Will Benefit Texans

- There are 2,392,000 Medicare beneficiaries in Texas. Of those in Texas, 592,000 beneficiaries do not have any prescription drug coverage. This program primarily benefits these individuals by assisting them in paying for the drugs they need.
- Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) estimates a potential for \$3.8 to \$5.1 billion in total beneficiary savings from discounted drug prices nationally.
- CMS expects 497,000 beneficiaries in Texas are currently eligible for the \$600 credit, which translates into potential savings of \$596 million.
- Texas has 46 individual drug cards, including 39 national drug cards, 4 regional cards and 3 Medicare Advantage exclusive cards.



With questions, please contact Medicare at www.medicare.gov or 1-800-MEDICARE. You are also welcome to contact one of my offices for further information at:

WASHINGTON, DC
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-4304
Tel: 202-224-5922
Fax: 202-224-0776

ABILENE
500 Chestnut Street, Suite 1570
Abilene, Texas 79602
Tel: 325-676-2839
Fax: 325-676-2937

AUSTIN
961 Federal Building
300 East 8th Street
Austin, Texas 78701
Tel: 512-916-5834
Fax: 512-916-5839

DALLAS
LB 606
10440 N. Central Expressway, Suite 1160
Dallas, Texas 75231
Tel: 214-361-3500
Fax: 214-361-3502

HARLINGEN
222 East Van Buren Street, Suite 404
Harlingen, Texas 78550
Tel: 956-425-2253
Fax: 956-412-1468

HOUSTON
1919 Smith Street, Suite 800
Houston, Texas 77002
Tel: 713-653-3456
Fax: 713-209-3459

SAN ANTONIO
145 Duncan Drive, Suite 120
San Antonio, Texas 78226
Tel: 210-340-2885
Fax: 210-349-6753

www.hutchison.senate.gov

Facts About the Medicare Drug Discount Card

*From U.S. Senator
Kay Bailey Hutchison*



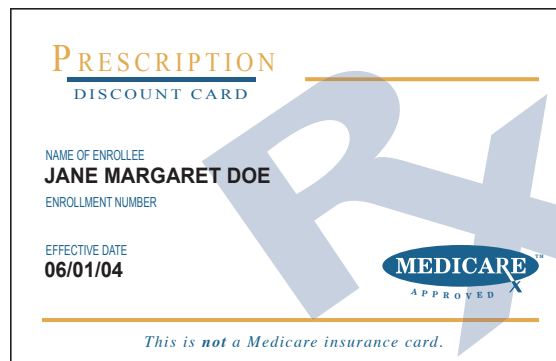
How The Card Will Benefit You

"The President and Congress made a promise to the American people to improve the Medicare system and deliver a prescription drug benefit. I'm pleased to announce the Medicare Drug Discount Card will provide seniors immediate assistance in lowering the cost of prescription drugs. Inside this brochure are facts about how you can benefit from this discount card."

- U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison

Prescription Drug Discount Card

- Immediate help is available to make prescription drugs more affordable through a prescription drug discount card.
- The enrollment fee for the drug card is no more than \$30 per year.
- Seniors save 10-25% off the cost of most medicines through this card, which is approved by the Medicare Program.
- Seniors simply take the card to their local participating pharmacy and receive the discount off the price of their prescriptions.
- The drug discount card can also be used to purchase drugs from mail-order pharmacies.



How to Choose the Right Drug Discount Card for You

- Enrollment in the program is voluntary. All Medicare beneficiaries, except those who have Medicaid drug coverage, can get the drug card.
- Beneficiaries have a number of Medicare-approved cards but will be allowed to enroll in only one drug card program at a time. Beneficiaries can enroll at any time before January 1, 2006, and, if they wish, can change card sponsors for 2005 during the annual Medicare open enrollment period (Nov. 15 to Dec. 31, 2004).
- Contact Medicare at 1-800-MEDICARE (1-800-633-4227) or view its website at www.medicare.gov and select "Prescription Drug and Other Assistance Programs" to find out which card will be best for you. TTY users should call 1-877-486-2048.
- Health and Human Services has issued information titled "Guide to Choosing a Medicare-Approved Drug Discount Card" explaining the program, eligibility and enrollment information, and provides step-by-step guidance for comparing discount cards and choosing the right one for you.



Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison speaking at the Methodist Hospital-Senior Resource Center in Dallas, TX.

Additional Help for Low-Income Seniors

- Qualified low-income seniors will receive immediate assistance with a \$600 credit on their Medicare discount card and will not pay an enrollment fee. Individuals who have outpatient prescription drug coverage through TRICARE, or other employer-sponsored drug plans, will not be eligible for the \$600 credit.
- Individuals making less than \$12,569 and couples making less than \$16,862 annually will be eligible for a \$600 credit in 2004 and again in 2005.
- Beneficiaries will receive the entire \$600 credit no matter when they sign up in 2004 and a pro-rated amount of the \$600, if they sign up after January 2005.
- Any of the \$600 not used in 2004 will be carried over in their account for use in 2005.
- Many drug manufacturers are offering their drugs at no cost after an individual spends their \$600 credit, providing even more value to the discount cards for low-income beneficiaries.